

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Jason Cooper on 02/23/2010.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claim 1 (Amended). A fluid pump comprising:

- a piston that is axially displaceable within a cylinder;
- the cylinder comprising a cylinder closing fluid-transfer plate;
- the piston being displaced towards the fluid-transfer plate and capturing gas or fluid from a low-pressure environment;
- the fluid pump comprising a sensor assembly that includes an inductive sensor associated with the fluid-transfer plate, the fluid-transfer plate being provided with a sealing joint structure;
- the fluid-transfer plate comprising a valve plate provided with a through-bore for association of a protector that cooperates with the bore, the sensor being positioned in contact with the low-pressure environment, the valve plate further defining a recess in contact with the low-pressure environment and extending

radially outwardly from the through-bore, and the sealing joint structure being disposed adjacent a surface of the valve plate in contact with the low-pressure environment and defining a generally planar portion overlying the recess in the valve plate; and

- at least a portion of the protector being fixed between the generally planar portion of the sealing joint structure and the recess defined in the valve plate.

Claim 11 (Amended). A fluid-transfer plate applicable to a fluid pump, comprising:

- a valve plate provided with a through-bore for association with a protector that cooperates with the bore,

-the protector comprising at least one sensor cavity configured for receiving an inductive sensor therein, and

- the valve plate comprising recesses for fixing the protector, the protector comprising protuberant ends and being fixed to the valve plate by means of a sealing joint structure, the protuberant ends being associable with the recesses in the valve plate and a generally planar portion of the sealing joint structure, the sealing joint structure being disposed adjacent the valve plate, wherein at least a portion of the protuberant ends are disposed between the recesses in the valve plate and the generally planar portion of the sealing joint structure.

Claim 15 (Amended). An inductive sensor and fluid pump assembly, the assembly comprising:

- the inductive sensor for detecting the position of a piston in the fluid pump, the piston being axially displaceable in a cylinder, and
- the fluid pump comprising a fluid-transfer plate, the fluid-transfer plate comprising a valve plate, the inductive sensor being installed on a protector, the protector being fixed to a through-bore provided in the valve plate, the valve plate comprising recesses for fixing the protector, the protector comprising protuberant ends configured such that outer surfaces of the protuberant ends are aligned with an outer surface of the valve plate and at least a portion of the protuberant ends are disposed between the recesses and a generally planar portion of a surface of a sealing joint structure that is disposed adjacent the outer surface of the valve plate.

Claim 20 (Amended). A fluid pump according to claim 1, wherein the valve plate comprises recesses for fixing the protector, the protector comprising protuberant ends configured such that a surface of the protector is aligned with a surface of the valve plate at the low-pressure environment, the sealing joint

structure being configured such that edges of the sealing joint structure are placed substantially over the protuberant ends.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The prior art neither teaches nor discloses a piston pump including a valve plate with a through-bore. Wherein a protector for an inductive sensor is located within said through-bore and fixed between a generally planar portion of a sealing joint structure and a recess in the valve plate extending outwardly from the through-bore.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to CHRISTOPHER BOBISH whose telephone number is (571)270-5289. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday, 7:30 - 6:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Devon Kramer can be reached on (571)272-7118. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Christopher Bobish/
Examiner, Art Unit 3746

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